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MUTUAL CRITICISM.

V.

HOW TO RECEIVE CRITICISM.

THE difference between a right and wrong spirit in receiving criticism, is the difference between manliness and childishness. A childish spirit frustrates the power and operation of truth in two ways: in one form it meets criticism with indifference, carelessness, sluggishness; it hears and forgets; it is not really pricked to the heart and stirred to manly action. Another almost opposite manifestation of childishness toward criticism, is a spirit which is too sensitive, too anxious for justification and in too much hurry for the results of the discipline. This spirit will break forth in anguish on the one hand, and rush into hurried action on the other; showing that its eye is on escape from suffering—on keeping a comfortable state of feeling rather than on improvement. A manly lover of criticism will not only take pleasure in the accomplishment of a good change in himself, but in the process by which it is accomplished. He will not only love the meat, but love to crack the nut. If we have an eye to the result alone, the process will be disagreeable to us. The man who paints a picture for the money to come for it merely, is no true artist. If he has any genuine taste he enjoys his work as well as its result. So in respect to criticism; the right spirit takes a quiet satisfaction in seeing the truth working out its process of improvement, and is not impatient for the fruit of it. In the childish spirit, a hopeful person will become excited and impatient, and set himself to bustling about in a way that does not accomplish any thing; while a person who is naturally despondent will be driven to despair and discouragement.

Suppose you are set to thread a needle; if you are all in a bustle, or if your eyes are full of tears, you cannot do it. You will do it only by being cool and quietly in earnest, and having your eyes clear. The operation of submitting ourselves to spiritual criticism so as to make it effectual, is like threading a needle; it cannot be done either in the agitation of hope or fear. The more trouble we are in, or the more difficult the thing to be done, the more need there is of a calm, patient, self-possessed spirit; *i. e.*, a manly spirit, free from childishness.

Different organizations show their peculiarities

in their manner of receiving criticism. No two persons are affected exactly alike. Temperaments have their influence, and particularly the predominance or deficiency of hope, conscientiousness, and self-esteem. Approbativeness manifests itself in sensitiveness to blame, and a care to put the best side out. Large self-esteem makes persons resist criticism as a false charge; it cannot bear the mortification of being found in the wrong, and hence is very liable to deceive itself; it is apt to take criticism as a personal attack. Large hope seems to foil criticism. It may be compared to soil that is too rich; which is just as unproductive as soil that has never been fertilized. Small hope and small self-esteem make a soil that is too damp—it wants the sun. Some temperaments make a soil that is too quick; its productions shoot up rapidly, but they are not strong-rooted and hardy. This soil wants the manure of *patience*, and needs to be plowed in deep furrows. Some soils are soft and deep, and need only the touch of the harrow; the seed planted in them, will take care of itself. The best soil is sunny, genial, deep, well exposed to the light and warmth of heaven, receptive to the dew and rain. A spirit that is constantly replenished with the strengthening and quickening elements of patience and enthusiasm for improvement, is the best for criticism.

In receiving criticism we may stand and take it as the fire of an enemy, and so feel wounded and sore; or we may go over and join the party that fires at us, in which case we shall feel unhurt. Let a person have the self-possession to take sides with the truth and help on any just criticism of himself and he will find he can endure the severest exposure of his faults without losing any of his self-respect or buoyancy of spirit. What self-respect he might lose by the discovery of his faults, is more than made up by the consciousness of being truthful; and by the justification which fellowship with the Spirit of Truth always brings. There is nothing more exhilarating than that electric union between our spirits and the Spirit of Truth, which is brought about by a courageous sacrifice of self to the truth. We enter into the joy of that Spirit, and into its self-complacency, in spite of the mortification we may superficially suffer. If we are members of Christ—one with his righteous, glorious life at the center—criticism does not touch the real *I*. It takes effect on only the external character, and that we can bear to have washed, as we do our clothes, without feeling ashamed or in any way damaged. The great secret of going through the judgment comfortably is to help judge ourselves.

A manly purpose of improvement is calm and rational, and will nurse itself for years to accomplish a desired change. The Bible speaks of men who "lie in wait to deceive," but we must "lie in wait" for the truth. Look at the cat lying in wait for the mouse. She is still; not a muscle stirs; but her eyes are shining with a bright, keen flame; and that flame indicates her purpose, while her stillness indicates her patience. There is nothing that pleases God more than to see us lie in wait for improvement with a bright eye, and without flurry. However far we may be from what he wishes us to be, if there is this purpose in us he is pleased with us. The hunter has glorious sport in running down the game as well as in overtaking it. A manly purpose will give us the same excitement and pleasure in the pursuit of self-improvement.

God waits for our improvement with long-suffering and patience; it is impolite and unkind for us to trouble him with our impatience when he is not impatient. The spirit that seeks improvement with reference to the enjoyment of the immediate result, is the essence of pleasure-seeking. When pleasure-seeking is cornered up, its last resort is to turn round and want to make improvement at a jump. Some persons fret to get a meek and quiet spirit. When we are under criticism the evil spirit is uneasy because he finds he must go out of us, and he makes us uneasy because we cannot jump instantaneously to a perfect correction of our faults.

To illustrate the difference between the childish and the manly spirit in receiving criticism: suppose we should suggest to a company of children or childish persons to build a house. We can imagine that some of them would think in a crude, presumptuous way, that they could easily do it, and begin immediately to fly round, all hurry and bustle, expecting to perform the job in a very short time. Others would look upon the undertaking as so monstrous that they never could hope to do it, and so would refuse to try. But a sensible man would lay his plans, gather his materials, and go about the job with an unwavering purpose, coolly expecting that it would take him months and perhaps years, to finish it. The great works of architecture and engineering may justly inspire our reverence, as exponents of manly purpose stretching through years, cool and self-sustained. We must learn from them to form immortal, self-sustaining purposes of personal improvement that do not depend on immediate fruitfulness; and then we shall love the criticism that helps us on in our work.

Observe that the idea of "lying in wait," is not on the one hand that of doing nothing, nor on the other, of bustling about; but it is to *watch*. Christ and Paul both said a great deal about watching. The faculty of watching with fire in the eye, is the great secret of power. It requires a perfect balance of spirit between eagerness and self-control. With that balance, criticism may not merely be endured, but welcomed as a positive pleasure.

After all this general and desultory advice to criticsers and criticisees, most persons probably will have some anxious doubts whether mutual criticism can be carried on without offenses and wrangling. Personal grudges and unjust mistakes are so apt to steal into the observations of those who criticise, and personal irritability under such grudges and mistakes, and even under kind and just censure, is so natural to those who are criticised, that it seems a great thing to expect ordinary human nature to go through the ordeal without "answering back," and so turning the criticism club into a debating society, and finally into a bear-garden. Undoubtedly this is the danger that stands in the way of Mutual Criticism.

And it must here be distinctly admitted that the successful introduction of this institution does require a certain amount of intelligence and civilization of the passions. The same is true, as every body knows, of all free institutions: such as common suffrage and trial by jury. The stupid and barbarous cannot run such machinery with profit and safety. And Mutual Criticism undoubtedly will require even a higher standard of civilization

than that in which these common institutions are possible.

We judge, however, that a large part of the civilized world is far enough advanced to handle the new machinery which we offer. There was civilization enough at Andover to invent it, and run it profitably forty-five years ago; and it has been in successful operation at Putney and Oneida for thirty years. Things are not generally invented and perfected long before the world is ready to use them.

Our advice to all societies, churches, Communities and clubs that think of starting Mutual Criticism is, to first sit down and count the cost, and to take our word for it that the cost will be nothing less than general humility enough to receive severe mortification and even unjust criticisms without reply and without offense.

For a good example of the right spirit in receiving criticism, we are glad to be able to point back to Rev. John A. Vinton, one of the Andover veterans whose testimony was published in the first of these articles. He says of his ordeal, "The process was severe and scathing in the extreme. Most of the remarks were just and kindly intended; some of them were, I have always thought, unkind, unjust, and rather too severe, at least. At the same time, as I wrote in my journal, I was conscious of other faults more heinous, and more dangerous to my soul and the cause of Christ, as committed more directly against God. The immediate result was to drive me to the blood of sprinkling, the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. After I went to my room I could but weep before God over my numerous faults, which had been so faithfully exposed." That is the way to take criticism, and it is easy when you know how and have the soft heart. If you cannot calculate on something like that in your circle, don't undertake Mutual Criticism.

NURSING THE SICK.

III.

SPIRITUAL CONDITIONS.

The following experience—told me many years ago by a confidential friend—illustrates what we mean by spiritual conditions, and their influences for good or for evil on the patient. I will give the story in his own language as nearly as I can—though it be a little quaint and peculiar and strong:

"It is now nine o'clock on seventeen years since I was taken sick with a fever—a sort of 'low, bilious fever,' the doctors called it. It brought me low enough, I can tell you, whatever it was. For three weeks, or thereabouts, they told me—for I knew nothing about it—at times I was raving crazy, and three men could scarcely hold me in bed, though generally I was so weak that I could not raise my head from my pillow. Well, I came to after awhile and knew where I was, but so perfectly used up and worn out that it really seemed as if I hadn't strength enough left to get well. I hung along in this way for nearly a month; half the time not caring a snap whether I got better or got worse. I had good nursing and doctors enough, Lord knows; there was Dr. C., our old family physician, and Dr. L., and Dr. T.; and finally when I was worst off, they sent over to —, and called in Dr. M. You know people always called him in bad cases. Somehow or other they couldn't agree as to what ailed me, and of course didn't know what to give me; so they compromised the matter by leaving a lot of medicine, calculating I suppose, that some of it would hit my case. And I reckon it did. My wife had about worn herself out waiting on me night and day, the neighbors had watched with me, and finally they hired a couple of professional nurses to take charge of me. Well, as soon as I came to myself, I used to lie there and count the bottles and vials and cups of medicine which stood on the stand and mantel-piece, and wonder how many of them I would have to empty before I got well or died—I didn't much care which. One or other of the doctors would come in every morning, feel of my pulse, and give directions to the nurse. My wife would flit in and out, and perhaps half-a-dozen neighbors would look in at the door and whisper, and dodge back and forth. My brother Sam's family lived near by, and they would all come over once or twice a day, and walk round on tip-toe and whisper and nod and look at the doctor and the nurse, and stumble against each other, trying not to make any noise. Finally old Eliza T. the professional shroud-maker of the village came into my room looking for all the world as if she were taking my measure for a funeral suit. By George, I began to think they would measure me for my coffin next! I did,—fact. The very air seemed full of funerals and shrouds and coffins and grave-diggers and the devil. I began to get mad, but what to do I didn't

know, I was really too helpless to do any thing. Just about then who should come in but old Tom P. who used to lumber it with me years ago when we lived on the Kennebec. I hadn't seen him for more than twenty years, but I knew him right off; the same bright, cheerful, big-souled man who always made things go, and go right. He never was sick in his life and never would let any body be sick when he was around. Well, he came in and sat down by my bed. He didn't say much, but he made the room look brighter. He staid there in the house several days, helping take care of me, but not talking much himself. Finally, one day he got every one else out of the room, and sitting down by my bedside told me that I was suffering from too much doctoring and nursing and medicines and all that. I don't remember exactly what he said, but his words were to that effect. He went on and talked to me about resisting disease and being hopeful, and not believing too much what the doctors and nurses said. I declare, the more he talked the better I felt, till finally I got right up in bed and shouted,

"Hurrah! for doctor Tom, he's my man. Turn out the rest; pack off the nurses and hearses, and smash every — bottle of medicine in sight."

"I guess Tom thought I was crazy. He quieted me and I soon fell asleep. And would you believe it, I began to mend right away and didn't take another drop of medicine either. Tom's presence and spirit drove the disease clean out of me. The doctors and nurses looked rather sulky at the 'interloper,' as they called him, but I would have him take charge of me and they couldn't help themselves. Perhaps I should have recovered if Tom hadn't come, but I rather guess not. I used to think every thing of doctors and medicine, but I tell ye what, there is something in conditions and influences which are around a sick man. I believe in them."

In this case the *spirit* of disease was evidently broken and driven out of the sick-room by the entrance of a new element; the *control* was changed by filling the room and the patient with a spirit of faith and hope and resistance to the powers which were oppressing him. Not often do we see such sudden changes as those described by my friend, or changes of so melodramatic a character; but the principle involved is one we have been studying many years. It is one which is of vital importance in treating the sick, and is becoming more and more appreciated in the medical profession generally. In an address to a graduating class of one of our prominent colleges, the President took occasion to remark on the subject of deportment:

"You will always remember that you are dealing with living, sentient beings; beings who are sensitive and receptive to personal influences; and especially receptive to their medical attendant to whom they look for help in this extremity. No matter how hopeless the case, or threatening the symptoms you are bound to take a cheerful view: to encourage, to look on the bright side as much as possible. Of course you will be called upon to tell the truth in regard to the probabilities of a recovery or of a fatal termination. But recollect that it is not a physician's first duty to pronounce a fiat of life or death. His duty is to combat disease to the bitter end: to cure disease, and not strengthen it by evil forebodings and dismal prognoses."

This is good doctrine so far as it goes, but we go a step farther and plant ourselves fairly and squarely on the ground of recognizing the spiritual character of disease, and of the necessity of fighting it with spiritual weapons. We admit that natural conditions have much to do with the propagation of disease; we recognize the importance of sanitary laws; of hygienic conditions and the truths which modern science has brought to light. We do not ignore nor disparage the value of medicines and the medical profession; but we find, that in addition to all this science, we must recognize the spiritual nature of disease and the importance of meeting it with spiritual means. And this we do through criticism. By a system of criticism we accomplish two objects:

1. We break the power of disease by driving out the evil spirits: and

2. We surround and envelope the patient with good spirits—faith, hope and courage.

This was the kind of treatment adopted by the Oneida Community during a campaign with the diphtheria in 1863-4; and this was the treatment adopted during the Fever-and-Agüe war at the Wallingford Community in 1875. In the fight with diphtheria the Community used criticism and ice. In the battle with Fever and Agüe, criticism and the Turkish Bath were employed. In both engagements the Community came off victorious.

In the conflict with diphtheria about sixty cases were treated with this compound medicine, and of these, fifty acknowledged a sensible benefit from criticism, while twenty-two received *instantaneous* relief.

The following is the experience of one of the cases who was thus relieved;

"My experience in reference to criticism was new, and to me, interesting. I was taken at night with a sore throat, which continued to grow worse, and the next day I had all the symptoms of diphtheria. Being no better at night, but rather worse, I sent for a committee. Their criticism immediately threw me into

a profuse perspiration, till I felt as though I had been in a bath; and before the committee had left the room my headache, backache, and fever were all gone. The criticism literally separated me from the spirit of disease that was upon me. I slept well and next day found myself substantially cured. I attribute my recovery to the Spirit of Truth administered in criticism."

This is a fair specimen of many testimonials given during that winter, of the efficacy of criticism in breaking up disease.

In the Fever-and-Agüe war so graphically described in the AMERICAN SOCIALIST by "H. H. S.," the same system of criticism was adopted with like results. We quote a few lines:

"A Board was appointed before the meeting broke up and it lost no time in giving the member whose saucy chill had been the signal for hostilities, a thorough course of 'criticism and fire.' The result was decisive. She was cured. After that it was not usual for a person to wait till his nose was an icicle before calling for succor. When the infected began to yawn and stretch and feel tired—awfully tired—without any apparent reason, when their bones became conscious, or, as some one expressed it, they 'felt a great superfluity of ossification in their limbs,' they hastened to put themselves in the care of the Board; or, if any were too listless to do that, the vigilance of this body supplied all lack. Their zeal was sleepless; they allowed nothing to interfere with their duty. They were on hand day and night at the least alarm or appearance of danger. And their work was effectual. The chills were headed off, discouraged, beaten—sent to limbo. The health and courage of the Community rose every day; and before a month had past victory was so sure that the united Communes passed a vote to quit their double-minded policy entirely, settle down at Wallingford, and begin preparations for a new house."

It is not only in epidemics of acute diseases that criticism has proved so effectual, but in the chronic ailments which are always lurking around, it has time and again broken the spell and set the captive free. Here is a scrap from a letter which is not wholly irrelevant:

"I had lost all hopes of ever getting well; I had tried almost every thing, including a much-vaunted special remedy, without getting any relief. I had settled down under a conviction that I should be an invalid the rest of my days; when a friend advised me to try a course of criticism. I replied that I had tried it, but without receiving much benefit, and that I did not believe it would cure me. However, I finally consented to submit my case to a committee. The effect of the first application was quite wonderful. The criticism was sharp and very humiliating to my old life, but through it all I felt a sense of being separated from the spirit of disease and unbelief which had so long held me in bondage. I felt hopeful of the future. The first criticism did not cure me at once, but it broke the spiritual power which held me. I could see daylight ahead. I felt that I was under a different *control*, and from that moment I began to mend; and now I call myself well."

In case of sickness among very young children, the spiritual control can be changed by criticism administered to the parents or special friends, and those who come into close contact with the children. In the history of the Oneida Community there are many instances where an epidemic of disease among the children has been broken up and scattered, by rousing the whole family to more faith and earnestness. A "faith meeting" is sure to produce a change in the spiritual control of the entire family, and SPIRITUAL CONTROL is the key-note in nursing the sick.

G. E. C.

Oneida Community, N. Y.

STRANGE THINGS

WHICH HAVE HAPPENED TO PEOPLE I KNOW.

II.

BY TIRZAH C. MILLER.

THIRTY-THREE years ago when Mrs. H. who is a very impressible character, was a young married woman, she lived for some time near her brother in a New England city, and a strong friendship grew up between herself and her brother's wife. Mrs. H. and her family moved away one summer to the village of B—— in New York. Mrs. H. heard several times from her sister-in-law that her health was quite poor, but she anticipated no serious result. One morning, however, she was suddenly awakened by the tolling of a bell—one, two, three and on to twenty-one, the age of her sister-in-law—the last stroke ringing in her ears with a weird and melancholy sound, though the bells of B—— were as silent as the church-yard. She immediately said to herself, "Sister Lucy is dead," and two days afterward she received a letter informing her that Lucy had indeed passed away at the same hour in which she received her impression.

In the year 1852, during the early days of the Oneida Community, Mrs. O., a friend of Mrs. H., died of consumption. She had a great repugnance to the idea of dying and talked frequently of returning if she found the plan a feasible one on reaching the other world.

Some of her friends begged her not to do so, when she turned to Mrs. H. and said, "You won't be afraid to see me, will you, Hannah?" "No, I won't, Mary," she answered. Several months after the death of her friend, Mrs. H. (who is one of the most vigorous, non-consumptive looking women I ever saw) awoke one night with a horrible oppression on her lungs and immediately became aware of a figure at her bedside. As quick as thought she threw the quilt over her head, exclaiming, "No, no, Mary! Go away! I don't want to see you!" For a number of days the soreness and pain remained in her lungs, though she had no symptoms whatever of a cold.

Two years afterward Mrs. N. died. For some time before leaving she had felt a great deal of anxiety about her eldest daughter, a young girl of fourteen, who was developing forward, coquettish proclivities to a degree which her mother considered very unbecoming. A few days before her death Mrs. N. sent for Mrs. H. and entreated her to talk seriously with her daughter respecting the error of her ways. Mrs. H. promised to do so, but soon found the task a more difficult one than she anticipated. She was little accustomed to laboring with people in that manner, and besides the girl was in no way related to her. She consequently put off the idea of talking with her herself thinking that she would get one of the leading women of the Community to do it. Immediately a presence attached itself to her, pushing and urging her to the fulfillment of her promise. It left her not an hour's respite, but clung to her as the old man did to Sinbad. When turning the corner of the house, or going from one room to another she often felt so impressed with the nearness of her departed friend that she would involuntarily turn her head to see her pass by. Goaded almost to desperation, she finally took the girl aside and remonstrated with her most sincerely for her course. The presence instantly left her and never troubled her again.

MR. K.'S STORY.

During the winter of 1852-3, I heard a voice speak distinctly to me, when no visible person was in the room. In order to make my statement intelligible I shall have to tell some experience which I was going through at the time. I was taking a course of treatment at the Glen Haven "Water-Cure." My health had failed me while at Oberlin College, and I had continued to run down for a year or more until I was so weak and reduced in flesh, that when I went to the "Cure" I was barely able to crawl about and help myself a little. The attending physician, after examining me, pronounced my case hopeful, which gave me much encouragement; but after a course of treatment, under which I gradually failed, the doctor began to lose hopes of me and expressed himself as doubtful of my recovery.

I had for some time previous been so much exercised on the subject of holiness or Salvation from Sin, that I had openly made a confession of Christ as a whole Savior, and had received an assurance that my confession was accepted of God. It had not occurred to me, however, that Christ was also a Savior of the body as well as of the soul. One day I was looking over the newspapers which were kept in the general reading-room, when I came across one published by the Oneida Community, in which I found several accounts of miraculous cures by faith. These faith-cures interested me very much and turned my attention to the subject for the first time; yet I did not make any special application of this faith to myself until after the following experience:

I was awakened one morning between three and four o'clock, and the question was asked me in a very distinct tone of voice, "*Do you wish to get well, or not?*" I heard the voice as plainly as I ever heard any thing in my life. I was unable to answer the question then. I did not know whether I wanted to live or die, I felt so resigned to do whatever God wanted to have me. I prayed a great deal during the following day, and tried to find out what God's will was concerning me. The next morning at the same hour I was again awakened and the same question was put to me in tones of remarkable clearness. This time I felt as though God had some work for me in this world and I replied, "I would choose to get well." Immediately I was so filled with the love of God that my chest swelled, it seemed to me, almost to bursting. I had also the fullest assurance that my wish would be granted so that nothing which subsequently followed could shake my faith, and now for twenty years that faith has been justified.

A trustworthy veteran tells the following queer story, which might do good among the tramps of these days, if

they would learn from it how to get what they want:

ABOUT A SIXPENCE.

In the old times of Perfectionism, when I was little better than a tramp, except that I trusted God, I was once walking with a brother tramp in the outskirts of New Haven—not having, either of us, home, friends or money—when I was taken with a longing for tobacco—the want of which, by the way, is generally worse than want of food to tramps who have ever been in bondage to it. I said to my companion, "I really wish the Lord would give me a sixpence to-day, so that I could buy me some tobacco." Just then a pleasant green bank at a little distance caught my eye and pointing to it I said, "Let us go there and lie down." We went, and as I stretched myself on the spot I had pointed out, behold, right under my eye among the grass was a sixpence! Of course we were astonished and pleased; and, considering ourselves licensed, we started for a grocery. On the way I picked up another sixpence in the middle of the street! "Look here," said I, holding it up, "the Lord has doubled the gift; this is for you!" We had a jolly time over those sixpences. Did they come by chance, or did somebody give them to us?

Here is another

ANSWER TO PRAYER.

When J. was Chaplain in the prison at Alexandria, in 1860, a young man was brought in for a first offense. He was so young and apparently unaccustomed to sin that J.'s heart was moved to pity and he determined if possible to save him from association with the hardened wretches who would be his daily companions if he remained there. On going to head-quarters he found that the youth could be liberated on paying a fine of twenty-five dollars, a large sum, however, for so slight an error. J. had only his quarterly allowance and could not command so much money as that at once, so he prayed to God to give it to him. A day or two afterward he received a short note from a distant brother, running as follows: "Dear J:—If you find yourself in want of twenty-five dollars, draw on me." This was a surprise, as it was the first time his brother had ever offered him money. J. immediately wrote for it, paid the young man's fine and sent him away rejoicing; but his brother was so disgusted with his impractical disposition of the funds that he never gave him another cent.

SALVATION OF THE BODY.

EDITOR AMERICAN SOCIALIST:—St. Paul clearly taught that the body is the temple of God, and that whosoever defileth the temple, him will God destroy. He says, "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?" "Know ye not that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." Defiling the body then, is simply defiling the temple of the living God. How few professing Christians realize this fact. People live regardless of the laws which govern the human body. There are innumerable ways in which this temple of the living God can be defiled. Any thing that disturbs the action of the brain or nervous system is a defilement of this temple. Tobacco, alcoholic stimulants, poisonous drugs, unwholesome food, impure air, sexual excess and abuse, and whatever tends either to impair the quality of the blood or injure any of the tissues, is a means of defiling this temple.

By defiling this temple we do despite to the spirit of God which dwells in us, for Paul says in another place, "As God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." If this temple is so defiled that the spirit of God cannot dwell in it, then most assuredly the temple will be destroyed. Whatever we do that injures the body tends to destroy our life. People use the body more as if it were an old useless dry-goods box, than the temple of the living God. The temple of God is something that is to be kept sacred and pure. Even a Mohammedan, when he approaches the house of his God, takes off his shoes and soiled garments and leaves them in the vestibule. When people realize that salvation of the body is a part of the Christian programme, they will have little difficulty in reconciling what is commonly denominated "science" with religion. They will take new views of Christianity. We ought to live in such a way that our lives can be prolonged indefinitely on the earth. Who has any right to say that the Creator of this universe cannot devise means whereby death may be overcome, and man be taken from the earth without the process called death? We read that the last enemy, "death," shall be destroyed and cast into the lake of fire. If people live in perfect obedience to the laws of

God, as revealed in his word and stamped on the hearts and minds of humanity, God would then dwell with them.

The resurrection of the body is clearly taught in the New Testament. Why not live so that our bodies will not die, and save the necessity of resurrection? These are questions worthy the consideration of all who believe in Christianity.

E. P. MILLER.

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COMMUNITY MEETINGS.

BY A. EASTON.

I.

Among the many aids to success in associative enterprise the subject of frequent meetings must ever hold a place of vital importance, not only because that "in the multitude of counselors there is safety," but also because the experience of all successful associations has tested the advantages of frequent assemblies, at which the attendance of every member is carefully encouraged.

The Shakers attach great value to their family gatherings and esteem them a most important means of unity, and so far as we have been able to learn, the same is true of all the successful Communities. The Oneida and Wallingford Communities have, from their earliest history, assembled in their hall, or other convenient place, every evening from eight to nine o'clock for a family meeting; and a few minutes' conversation on the subject with any one of their earnest members, will suffice to show the high appreciation in which this ordinance is held among them. They will tell you of wonderful rest from weariness of body and spirit, of cares laid aside, of hearts filled with joy and life, of crooked ways made straight, and of discords transformed into harmonies.

It is reasonable to suppose that in associations, the same natural laws will apply as to society outside, and we know that meetings are indispensable to all the great enterprises of the World. When any important object is to be attained, men instinctively call mass-meetings, and whether, in the interest of politics stump-meetings are convened, or camp-meetings are called in the cause of religion, we find the same means resulting in the same general stirring up and meeting of men's minds on particular subjects. It is the old proverb verified over again, as "iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend."

There may be nothing practical gained at such meetings so far as we can see at the time. People meet and talk and to all outward appearance all things remain as they were, but subsequent events prove the contrary. When we shall be able to look behind the scenes, we shall see that in the world of the invisibles, heart ties are made and combinations formed wherever people meet together, of which they now little dream. Meetings are seances wherein the currents of life intermingle and form batteries, the discharges of which may be harmless as an ordinary thunder-clap, or they may shake the foundations of the earth.

In dealing with meetings we are dealing with occult, as well as visible agencies, and it is indispensable that proper conditions be studied, so that the desired end be obtained. The Shakers and the Oneida Communists, and doubtless others besides them, have studied the philosophy of this subject and they recognize that their meetings have conduced largely to the success they have met in attaining unity. They undoubtedly took their cue from the Primitive Christians who were in earnest not to "forsake the assembling of themselves together," and from that spirit of Revivalism that draws people together by thousands in meetings that, though with difficulty adjourned from day to day, continue in session in some mysterious sphere so that those who are absent find their hearts knit with those who are still taking an active part in the work.

We do not pretend to teach or to know all the philosophy of frequent meetings, we only call the attention of those interested in associative movements to the fact that the only successful Communities have derived great help from their meetings, and that there is spiritual power connected with such gatherings, that Communists can not afford to ignore, and must study how to direct.

It can be easily imagined that, apart from the enthusiasm and confidence that frequent meetings tend to promote, they must be invaluable in any state of society in so far as they can be made the means of promoting and sustaining a certain standard of public opinion. Then again, if there is any discontent or disaffection, it would be more than likely to be brought to the surface in some of the discussions in a meeting, thus affording opportunity for exhortations to unity, and for explaining away many of those trifles that might otherwise ripen

into open discord and dismemberment. For these and for numerous other reasons that will occur to everybody who studies the subject, we earnestly recommend all those who are trying socialistic experiments, to institute a system of frequent meetings in which all persons associated may speak often one with another, on the subjects in which they have a common interest, but in which the leading thought and the prominent desire of all must be unity.

AMERICAN SOCIALIST.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 10, 1876.

Who would not increase the blessings of Home? "If any, speak, for him have we offended."

THE "tidal wave" of interest in Socialism which is rising in this country, brings us an increasing number of requests to notice in our paper new Socialistic movements, proposed or already undertaken. Those who are ambitious of founding new Communities want to be made acquainted with persons desirous of joining such, and *vice versa*. It seems a natural function of the AMERICAN SOCIALIST to assist these two classes of persons in approaching each other, as it is the representative Socialistic paper of the world. There have, however, been objections to our undertaking such a part, on account of the difficulty of ascertaining the reliability of the various attempts, and because we did not like to discriminate, admitting some and rejecting others.

But we have bethought ourselves of a plan on which we will undertake this service. We will give up such space in a column of our paper as may be required, and will publish in it, without inquiry or comment, any decent notices of Socialistic ventures, at a fixed price of one cent for each word. If this proves acceptable it will give the readers of our paper the very latest information concerning all such movements, which is quite desirable, and will at the same time allow those whom the paper serves to help sustain it. It will bring persons who desire Community homes into direct communication with the homes which lack members.

While this plan will free us from any responsibility, moral or other, as endorsing schemes advertised, it being well understood beforehand that we publish every respectably-worded notice that is offered and paid for, it will also leave us perfectly free to avow our convictions concerning the various enterprises, and even strenuously to caution the public against impostures and hare-brained schemes, where we become possessed of information calling for such a course.

The notice of Mr. J. W. Gaskin's proposed "Democratic Community" in the present issue, inaugurates this new plan of ours. It is an example of the kind of project that we can by no means endorse or take any responsibility for, as our readers very well know. We do not believe a Community with no religion can succeed. But it seems to us that it will be an actual benefit to the world to have such enterprises honestly announced, instead of being worked out in obscurity, as thousands of them are. Those who want to know more of Mr. Gaskin's plan than his notice tells can write to him.

TWO REQUISITES.

As the old English receipt for cooking a hare begins with saying, "First catch your hare," so we would begin by saying to one who contemplated starting a Community, First get your inspiration for starting it. Any man or woman who has the spirituality which is indispensable in the leader of a Community will know what this means. It means that interior prompting which comes from the habit of inquiring the will of God, accompanied, it may be, by some slight external signs of preparation. These signs of preparation are likely to be close at hand, and of the most simple character. Fourier wanted as a preliminary to his model Association, a palace with a domain four miles square. This, when all material things were in readiness, was to be occupied by eighteen hundred people, and universal harmony was prophesied. We believe that the simplest kind of an old-fashioned home is a more favorable germ for Communism than this. The Oneida Community was begun by a man's simply cultivating heart unity with his mother and his own brothers and sisters in their old homestead. This heart unity led (as it always must when it is deep enough) to unity of temporal interests. The brothers and sisters married, and their families were added to the little society. Communism is not at its inception or at any other time dependent upon numbers. "If two or three of you agree as touching any thing it shall be done." Thus we would show people

that a Community may be so simple in its origin, and of such slow and silent growth as scarcely to be perceived as such. "The kingdom of heaven cometh not with observation." We would emphasize this point by reiteration. If you have an inspiration for starting a Community, do not look abroad for some of the world's great men to hasten to add their talents to your cause, and then stand wondering that they do not do so. Your material is likely to be so close to your hand that you will overlook it if you do not take care. This material, too, is most likely to be those plain and simple-minded folks whose hearts are much bigger than their heads. They are sober-minded people who have been much fonder of revivals and revival leaders, than they have of reforms and reformers. They are men who have a sterling spot in their breasts which has kept them faithful to the churches and to marriage, and has made them honest and tender-hearted and thrifty. If these true-hearted men who have no intellectual or social brilliancy give themselves to your cause, you may be glad; for when they are tried they will "come forth as gold." "Not many wise are called." After a Community has laid a deep and solid foundation of heart material, it can build up its own intellect in due proportion, keeping it subordinate to the heart and free from callous pride and stony skepticism. The young people of a prosperous Community are sure to have, in the end, all the intellectual advantages of a University, all the religious advantages of a revival church, and all the social refinements of a perfect home.

Next to the inspiration necessary to make a simple movement toward Communism (and by Communism we mean always and primarily heart unity) is an ever present and inextinguishable belief in Providence. Not in a vague and general Providence but in one as special and definite and care-taking, as a person. This belief, expressed or unexpressed and in greater or less strength, is, in our opinion, a *sine qua non* of successful Communism. Such a belief would, we are sure, be the inevitable accompaniment of and growth from a true inspiration for Communism, and we can scarcely conceive of the pioneers of a Community going through the necessary trials and labors of their beginning without it. It is the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night which led the Children of Israel. It enables those who have it to bear toils and privations with cheerfulness; it redoubles their joy in prosperity and keeps them from fainting in adversity. It fastens the attention upon God rather than upon man, and thus acts as a check upon evil-thinking, and chiding, and makes men patient, forbearing and gentle. When the private histories of successful Communism shall be written, the providences which have attended them will appear more curious and interesting than romances.

Where Inspiration and Providence go together (and they always travel hand in hand) there will be sure to be safe practical wisdom and sound common sense. The earnest people who harbor these guests, will not, like the poor Sylvanians, send a cooper, a landscape painter, and a homeopathic doctor to select their land, and thus settle on a cold and sterile mountain. They will pick their best men for their places of trust and consider their moves none the less earnestly for believing that their best wisdom will be supplemented by one which is higher.

It seems to have become a pretty well-established rule now-a-days, that any great public work must fight its way to possible success through a crowd of legal obstructions interposed by individuals or organizations who fancy their rights or profits in danger from the new enterprise. We note that the three greatest improvements which are now being made in and around New-York are suffering from difficulties of this kind, which have materially impeded their progress and increased their cost. We allude to the Brooklyn Bridge, the tunnel under the North river, between New-York and Jersey City, and the movement for rapid transit. All these schemes, which no one denies will be productive of great public benefit, have been hampered with injunctions to an extent which has made their completion more or less a matter of doubt. The street-car companies do not want their passengers to be drawn away by steam-lines which will go from one point to another in less than half the time now required. Ship and wharf owners have just found out that the great bridge will be too low, and that some vessels will have to strike their top-masts in order to pass it; and none of the railways terminating in Jersey City want to see one or two of their rivals have an outlet into New-York. After considerable delay, however, the Courts have decided that the Brooklyn Bridge and the Hudson river tunnel shall be completed; and we presume the rapid transit enterprises will finally triumph in the same way; still the question arises, how

long it will be before any system of public improvement will be impossible, on account of its interference with established individual or private rights. As the thing operates at present, every new enterprise when once completed, becomes, by virtue of the capital invested in it, a barrier to farther improvement in the same direction. When the Brooklyn bridge is finished, every person who has any pecuniary interest in it will oppose, by all possible means, the project for connecting the two cities by means of a tunnel; and the managers of the rapid transit companies, who just now feel very much abused by the horse-car lines, will soon be working with all their power, and using all the machinery of the courts, to prevent the introduction of other steam-lines. It is a little melancholy to see our best schemes for public improvement jostle one another in this way, but we hope for better things in the new dispensation that is coming.

COMMUNITY BUILDING.

A STUDY OF FOUNDATION PRINCIPLES.

As an introduction to what we have to say under this head, we give the following letter lately received:

Fair Haven, Conn., July 17, 1876.

ED. AM. SOCIALIST:—I am anxious to correspond with some parties with a view to the organization of a new Co-operative or Communistic society. Can you aid me by giving me the address of some persons equally inclined?

For a number of years I have been a careful student of the writings of the Oneida Community, and as those teachings have been so much in harmony with the religious tendencies of my life, it was but the natural consequence that I should be converted to Communism by them. In heart, and in life too, so far as my circumstances would permit, I have been a Communist for years. By that I mean that I have endeavored to regulate my actions and conduct agreeably to the rules which must obtain in successful Community life. I said I had been at heart a Communist. I believe the heart must be right or the life cannot be right. If the heart is full of selfishness and envyings the life will of necessity show it. Unless Christ is in the heart we are in no condition to be happy or to make others happy.

I have long been persuaded that the best results, either in business or in religion, can be obtained only through combined effort. And I have often desired to unite myself and family either to some well-organized Community or to some new one, if I could find one with principles in harmony with my own. But the human heart is so selfish I have doubted my own ability to bring to a Community-life that degree of self-forgetfulness necessary to fulfill its duties and obligations. And yet trusting for strength in the Good Father who "giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not," I am persuaded I should not be entirely out of place in a Christian Community.

After carefully considering the matter I have fully determined to put my long-cherished plan into execution provided God opens the way.

Hoping you may think this of sufficient importance to warrant a reply, I am yours with sincere respect,

L. P. DEMING.

Mr. Deming's letter is the forerunner of a great number of similar ones which we expect to see by and by. When large numbers of people are converted to Communism they will naturally ask the questions Mr. Deming asks. They will say:

"Now that I have been converted to Communism by your teaching, and have determined to give myself and all I have heartily to it, can you help me to take the necessary practical steps?"

"Where can I find reliable persons of a like belief to associate with?" etc., etc.

We think these questions merit candid answers, and we will accordingly undertake to define our attitude toward persons making such appeals.

It is evident that if there should be any large number of converts to Socialism they could not all hope to join already-existing Communities. New Communities, and probably a good many of them, will have to be formed. A knowledge of the principles on which these new Communities should be built is of great importance, since indifference to these principles is to court failure. We have an exceeding strong desire to save the cause of Socialism from the disgrace of another Bull Run like that of Fourierism. And as we cannot undertake to personally superintend the organization and subsequent management of new Communities; we think we can do the greatest good to all by candidly and carefully stating now what we consider the true plan for assembling the members of a Community designed to be united and enduring.

The past has taught some stern lessons in regard to this matter. Let us learn all that we can from it. Those who have heretofore attempted Communism have tried various ways of enlisting associates, some of which

ways proved so disastrous that they should never again be relied upon. In the "History of American Socialisms," p. 56, we find this passage concerning Robert Owen's failures:

"Owen's method of getting together the material of his Community, seems to us the most obvious *external* cause of his failure. It was like advertising for a wife; and we never heard of any body's getting a good wife by advertising. A public invitation to 'the industrious and well-disposed of all nations,' to come on and take possession of 30,000 acres of land and a ready-made village, leaving each one to judge as to his own industry and disposition, would insure a prompt gathering—and also a speedy scattering.

"This method, or something like it, has been tried in most of the non-religious experiments. The joint-stock principle, which many of them adopted, necessarily invites all who choose to buy stock. That principle may form organizations that are able to carry on the businesses of banks and railroads after a fashion; because such businesses require but little character, except zeal and ability for money-making. But a true Community, or even a semi-Community, like the Fourier Phalanxes, requires far higher qualifications in its members and managers.

"The socialistic theorists all assume that Association is a step in advance of civilization. If that is true, we must assume also that the most advanced class of civilization is that which must take the step; and a discrimination of some sort will be required, to get that class into the work, and shut off the barbarians who would hinder it.

"Judging from all our experience and observation, we should say that the two most essential requisites for the formation of successful Communities, are *religious principle* and *previous acquaintance* of the members. Both of these were lacking in Owen's experiment. The advertising method of gathering necessarily ignores both."

The point contained in this passage is further emphasized later on in the same work, in the final review of Communistic attempts, and is in these forcible words:

"The one feature which distinguishes these Communities from the transitory sort, is their religion; which in every case is of the earnest kind which comes by recognized afflatus, and controls all external arrangements.

"It seems then to be a fair induction from the facts before us that earnest religion does in some way modify human depravity so as to make continuous Association possible, and insure it great material success. Or if it is doubted whether it does essentially change human nature, it certainly improves in some way the *conditions* of human nature in socialistic experiments. It is to be noted that Mr. Greeley and other experts in Socialism claim that there is a class of 'noble and lofty souls' who are prepared for close Association; but their attempts have constantly been frustrated by the throng of crotchety and selfish interlopers that jump onto their movements. Now it may be that the tests of earnest religion are just what are needed to keep a discrimination between the 'noble and lofty souls' and the scamps of whom the Socialists complain. On the whole, it seems probable that earnest religion does favorably modify both human depravity and its conditions, preparing some for Association by making them better, and shutting off others that would defeat the attempts of the best. Earnest men of one religious faith are more likely to be respectful to organized authority and to one another, than men of no religion or men of many religions held in indifference and mutual counteraction. And this quality of respect, predisposing to peace and subordination, however base it may be in the estimation of "Individual Sovereigns," and however worthless it may be in ordinary circumstances, is certainly the indispensable element of success in close Association.

"The logic of our facts may be summed up thus: The non-religious party has tried Association under the lead of Owen, and failed; the semi-religious party has tried it under the lead of Fourier, and failed; the thoroughly religious party has not yet tried it; but sporadic experiments have been made by various religious sects, and so far as they have gone, they have indicated by their success, that earnest religion may be relied upon to carry Association through to the attainment of all its hopes. The world then must wait for this final trial; and the hope of the triumph of Association cannot rationally be given up, till this trial has been made.

"The question for the future is, Will the Revivalists go forward into Socialism; or will the Socialists go forward into Revivalism? We do not expect any further advance, till one or the other of these things shall come to pass; and we do not expect overwhelming victory and peace till both shall come to pass.

"The best outlook for Socialism is in the direction of the local churches. These are scattered every-where, and under a powerful afflatus might easily be converted into Communities. In that case Communism would have the advantage of previous religion, previous acquaintance, and previous rudimental organizations, all assisting in the tremendous transition from the old world of selfishness, to the new world of common interest. We believe that a church that is capable of a genuine revival, could modulate into daily meetings, criticism, and all the self-denials of Communism, far

more easily than any gathering by general proclamation for the sole purpose of founding a Community.

"If the churches can not be put into this work, we do not see how Socialism on a large scale is going to be propagated. Exceptional Associations may be formed here and there by careful selection and special good fortune; but how general society is to be resolved into Communities, without some such transformation of existing organizations, we do not pretend to foresee. Our hope is that churches of all denominations will by and by be quickened by the Pentecostal Spirit, and begin to grow and change, and finally, by a process as natural as the transformation of the chrysalis, burst forth into Communism."

The man who proposes to himself to start a Community has, then, this logical deduction from the history of all past attempts confronting him at the outset: viz., that to succeed he must select for members of his proposed Community persons of real religious principle, and only those who have had such previous acquaintance with each other as to inspire mutual respect and confidence.

We may further avail ourselves of past careful study of this point by re-printing a paragraph from our "Salutatory," (see AMERICAN SOCIALIST, Vol. I., No. I.) written by the Editor. Commenting on the question "How large ought Home to be?" and after expressing a hope that enlarged homes with their many economies and comforts may become common, he says:—

"But hopes shall not run away with us. 'Hasten slowly,' is a good motto. We do not believe that the world can jump into these enlarged homes. We have no idea of repeating the folly of the Fourierists. Once is enough for a pell-mell rush out of the old homes, over the frail bridge of a closet-made theory, in search of a paradise of Phalanxes. The measures which we propose to institute will not be the manufacture of Communities by the signing of Constitutions, but the preparation of *conditions* in which Communities may at some future time *form themselves by organic growth*. We hope to see a generation of Socialists which will begin by forming in every village and neighborhood, nay in every church, a Socialist Club similar to the old Lyceums and the Young Men's Christian Associations, having for their object to help one another in the study and discussion of Socialism. With meeting-rooms, libraries of socialist books, evening discussions, and finally *mutual criticism*, schools of Socialism may be opened at once, easily and every-where, which, on the one hand, will be in themselves far more interesting than any similar gatherings that have preceded them, and on the other will prepare those who take part in them for safe graduation at last into Communities."

This, taken in connection with the foregoing remarks, is a practical, plain answer to Mr. Deming and others similarly situated. From it may be gathered that we consider certain preliminaries absolutely essential to successful association in Communism. These preliminaries are thorough acquaintance of the parties, religious unity and earnestness, training in mutual criticism of personal character, etc. For attempts made without securing these necessary preparations we cannot too positively disclaim all responsibility. We shall be interested to hear from Mr. Deming and others what their chances are in their present circumstances of securing these preliminary conditions. Finally, let us say that in expressing our views on this subject we have no wish to dogmatize. We merely state what past experience has taught, and what we believe all experience will confirm. Let people write out their ideas and explain the difficulties under which they labor in their desired advance into Communism. We will discuss the matter further.

THE quarrel between the Republican Press and the Jesuits, in France, seems to be a small, personal affair, rather than a movement actuated by any political or religious principle. It would seem that the Jesuits were charged by some of the leading journals with interfering with the examination of the polytechnic students, by furnishing them with a list of the questions to be asked: upon which the Jesuits brought suit against the newspapers for libel. In retaliation, the entire liberal Republican Press is attempting to set going a movement for the suppression of the Jesuits, and it is not impossible that they may succeed, though such a result is not probable. During the 2d Empire, the Catholic religion received a semi-official support from the Government, which has been withdrawn since the establishment of the Republic; and in consequence, all forms of organization based on Catholicism are weaker than formerly. It does not follow that Catholicism, or even Jesuitism can be easily eradicated in France, as the religious leanings of the masses are too strongly Catholic to be readily changed; but the movement of events indicates that the disposition to yield unquestioned sovereignty to the dictates of the leaders of the Catholic Church, is not now the dominant feeling in France. There is no doubt that

under the present *régime* the sentiment of religious independence in the French nation is slowly, though steadily strengthening.

WHICH IS THE MOST NATURAL, EXISTING SOCIETY OR COMMUNISM?

[Editorial Correspondence.]

Aboard the Cars, July 27, 1876.

My neighbor is sociable and intelligent—is keenly alive to the shifting phases of society—has a decided opinion of his own, yet is free from all dogmatism of spirit or manner: in short, is just that sort of man one likes to find himself beside in the cars. We both are ticketed for Brocton, the home of the Respirationists; and conversation naturally turns on the subject of Communism, my neighbor urging that it is unnatural and impossible on any large scale.

"How is it unnatural?" I venture to ask.

"In many ways," he replies, "unnatural in that it interferes greatly with one's personal freedom—unnatural in that it keeps the greater number in childish subjection to their leaders—unnatural in that it deprives one of all feeling of ownership. A Communist is only part of a great machine, and has no independent action, no real liberty. He must move at another's bidding. Then Communism is unnatural and unjust because it makes all share alike—the industrious and the lazy, the provident and the shiftless. It seems to me altogether better that every man should stand by himself and hoe his own row in life."

"The Communists," I reply, "themselves would scarcely allow you to state their case. They claim there is more genuine freedom in united action than in personal independence; that they have the same feeling of ownership which is felt, for instance, by the members of a well-organized family; and that in a Community genuine merit in character or conduct is more sure to be rewarded than in ordinary society. But whether their claims be true or not, I cannot avoid noticing many things in society as it is which seem as far from being natural and right as the things you have mentioned as objections to Communism; and they that live in glass houses must not throw stones, you know. For illustration: here is a man who is not particularly moral or meritorious in any respect; but he is shrewd and scheming, and manages to make himself rich. He builds a fine house, buys a good farm, rides in a splendid carriage, drawn by high-stepping horses; he has servants at his command; his children are educated at the best institutions in the country, and lack for nothing. His neighbor across the way may be more worthy in every respect, but lacking the scheming characteristics which have made the other so prosperous, he may have to go through life in penury, with difficulty securing the bare necessities of life for himself and family; his children grow up in rags and ignorance. That does not seem natural, if by that word we mean what is right. Does it not seem more natural that society should be so organized that its members shall help one another? No one is sufficient in himself in all respects. Each has his strong points and weak points; and it seems as though a perfectly natural state of society would have mutual assistance for its foundation principle, and not mutual independence and competition. Does it not?"

"Well, Communism is a mere theory—fascinating and plausible; but it can never work, carried out logically, it interferes with the family relation; and the family is a perfect institution."

"Is that really so? Does it afford complete social happiness? On the contrary, are not the great majority of American families quite unable to satisfy the social, mental and spiritual wants of their members? And is not the growing tendency of our people to mass together in cities and villages owing to this fact?"

"Undoubtedly there are many unhappy families; but they seem to me exceptional, and it will not answer, you know, to take too much account of the exceptions. Family homes seem to me generally to be happy places."

"The Communists claim that they conserve all the good there is in them, and increase their happiness many fold by the increase of numbers, and of facilities for entertainment and improvement, diminution of labor, abolition of drudgery, etc., etc."

"Yes, Yes; splendid theory, but never will work, except with picked companies."

"You say Communism is unnatural; but how many things are there in your model form of society which are unnatural? For instance, there is a large class of people who would actually regard a great war or plague or famine or fire as a blessing, because these things would give the poor laborers more scope; and a bountiful harvest, excessive production in any department, as

a curse, because diminishing the demand for labor. If Communism generally prevailed, bountiful production would prove a blessing to all, as it would only afford leisure for improvement and encourage pleasanter sorts of labor."

"Yes, I must admit that existing society is faulty enough, but after all, Communism is not likely to displace it in our time." W. A. H.

THE BROCTON COMMUNITY.

Its Founder a Mountain Cove Leader--Migrations--Non-Intercourse with the world--"Respirations," etc. Brocton, N. Y., July 27, 1876.

NINE years ago Thomas L. Harris settled in this place under spiritual guidance, as he claims, and commenced what is now known as the Brocton Community. Mr. Harris had previously made himself widely known as a Universalist preacher, a Spiritualist, the author of some of the best poems found in Spiritualistic literature, and especially as one of the founders and leaders of the Mountain Cove Community in Virginia nearly twenty-five years ago—one of the most singular institutions which ever existed in any land. Some of the deluded ones supposed they had found the garden of Eden, the identical spot where our first parents sinned, and on which no human foot had trod since Adam and Eve were driven out. There the chosen were to "escape the vales of death;" there "a city of refuge was to be builded as a hiding-place and a shelter; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." There angels were to ascend and descend. "In that mountain the Lord of hosts was to make unto all people a feast of fat things, and to destroy the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations." Scott and Harris, the principal leaders, professed absolute divine inspiration and entire infallibility; that the infinite God communicated with them directly, without intermediate agency.

That Community of course was short-lived; the serpent again made trouble in the garden of Eden; there were quarrels about property and rebellion against leaders; and the city of refuge became a city of discord and confusion; and those who had fled to the mountain now fled to their former homes.

Fourteen years intervened between the collapse of the Mountain Cove experiment and the founding of this Salem-on-Erie—years of trial and battle, we may suppose, for Mr. Harris. During this period he became a leader of Christian Spiritualism against Infidel Spiritualism; spent several years in England preaching strange doctrines; lived five or six years at Amenia, Dutchess County, New York, where he prospered as a banker and agriculturalist, and gathered about him a circle of devoted disciples, who followed him to this place when the inspired order came.

Mr. Harris in obedience to another voice, we suppose, (for he still claims to be guided in all his operations by inspiration), has purchased a tract of land in California, and has recently migrated thither with a part of his disciples. Whether the entire Community will join him there is a question which probably no one could answer at present.

The Community does not appear to have greatly prospered here financially. Their eating-house at the railway junction burned down a year or so ago; their hotel and store are closed; their large vineyards, from which they expected to realize great profits, have disappointed them; they have sold off all their wines, and are letting their vineyards run out; they hold so much land they have to depend to some extent on hiring service for its cultivation; and of course let some of it take care of itself. Besides, for much of it, too high a price was paid to realize a great percentage of profit on the investment.

On the other hand, from all that can be learned, the Communists have lived harmoniously and happily, and have the greatest confidence in their chosen leader. They have won a reputation for integrity, temperance, and all such virtues, scarcely inferior even to that of the Shakers.

Still to my question, "Do you regard the Communists as a blessing to the town?" addressed to citizens here and there, I seldom got a hearty "Yes," and occasionally a well rounded "No." Some complain that the Communists keep themselves entirely separate from others, and "tie up" capital in land and in other ways that might be employed to the great advantage of the town. This of course is their privilege and right; but on the other hand, it cannot be expected that there will be general rejoicing in the growth of any institution that does not bless others as well as its own members. In this view the employment of a great number of non-

members by Communities having prosperous manufacturing businesses is seen to be wise, though its subjective evils to the Communities are not easily estimated.

The Brocton town's people don't like it that the Communists are so secretive about all their affairs, and they are right. Communists must look two ways in this respect: on the one hand, mind their own business; on the other, show that they themselves have no secrets. It is easy for Communists to reply to all questions touching their internal economies, "That it is a private matter which does not concern the public;" but the reply is hardly accurate. When a new form of society asserts itself the adherents of the old forms naturally feel that they have a right to know all about it; and this feeling is not based on mere curiosity. In the broadest sense mankind is a unit, and one part has a right to know what the other parts are doing. Ask the people of Brocton such simple questions as these:

How many acres of land do the Communists own?

How many members have they?

How is their property held?

And you will get no trustworthy replies, for the reason that the Communists keep all their affairs to themselves, and mingle with the outside world just as little as possible.

Many a reader of Nordhoff's "Communitistic Societies of the United States," must have been surprised to see that a work which devotes several pages to the "Cedar Vale Community," numbering at the time it was published scarcely half a dozen members, and a chapter to the "Social Freedom Community," which had as "full members two women, one man and three boys," and even describes some colonies which are not Communitistic, should make no mention of the Brocton Community; but it is doubtless accounted for by the fact of their aversion to publicity, and the difficulty of obtaining accurate information about them.

The best account I have ever seen of the Brocton Community was written several years ago for the New York *Sun* by Oliver Dyer, now a minister in the Swedenborgian church. It has many indications of having been sanctioned by Mr. Harris, and may be safely quoted as entirely trustworthy. The following paragraphs relating to their religious doctrines are from his summary:

"This is a very religious Community. Swedenborg furnishes the original doctrinal and philosophical basis of its faith, to which Mr. Harris, as he conceives, has been led by Providence to add other and vital matters, which were unknown until they were revealed through him. They reverence the Scriptures as the very word of God.

"The fundamental religious belief of the Community may be summed up in the dogma, that there is one God and only one, and that he is the Lord Jesus Christ. The religion of the Community is intensely practical, and may be stated as, faith in Christ, and a life in accordance with his commandments.

"And here comes in the question, What is a life in accordance with Christ's commandments? Mr. Harris and his fellow believers hold that when a man is 'born of the spirit,' he is inevitably drawn into communal relations with his brethren, in accordance with the declaration that 'the disciples were of one heart and one mind, and had all things in common.'

"This doctrine of Communism has been held by myriads, and repeated attempts have been made, but made in vain, to embody it in actual life. It is natural therefore, to distrust any new attempt in the same direction. Mr. Harris is aware of this general distrust, and of the reasons for it; but he claims that he has something which places his attempt beyond the vicissitudes of chance, and bases it upon immutable certainty; that hitherto there has been no palpable criterion whereby the existence of God could be tested, no tangible test whereby the indication of his will could be determined; but that such criterion and test have now been vouchsafed, and that on such criterion and test to him communicated, his Community is founded.

"The pivot on which this movement turns, the foundation on which it rests, the grand secret of the whole matter, is known in the Community as 'open respiration,' also as 'divine respiration;' and the starting point of the theory is, that God created man in his own image and likeness, and breathed into him the breath of life. That the breathing into man of the breath of life was the sensible point of contact between the divine and human, between God and man. That man in his holy state was, so to speak, directly connected with God, by means of what might be likened to a spiritual respiratory umbilical cord, which ran from God to man's inmost or celestial nature, and constantly suffused him with airs from heaven, whereby his spiritual respiration or life was supported, and his entire nature, physical as well as spiritual, kept in a state of godlike purity and innocence, without, however, any infringement of man's freedom.

"That after the fall of man this spiritual respiratory connection between God and man was severed, and the

spiritual intercourse between the Creator and the creature brought to an end, and hence spiritual death. That the great point is to have this respiratory connection with God restored. That Mr. Harris and those who are coöperating with him have had it restored, and are in the constant enjoyment thereof. That it is by this divine respiration, and by no other means, that a human being can get irrefragable, tangible, satisfactory evidence that God is God, and that man has or can have conjunction with God. This divine respiration retains all that is of the natural respiration as its base and fulcrum, and builds upon and employs it for its service.

"In the new respiration, God gives an atmosphere that is as sensitive to moral quality as the physical respiration is to natural quality; and this higher breath, whose essence is virtue, builds up the bodies of the virtuous, wars against disease, expels the virus of hereditary maladies, renews health from its foundations, and stands in the body as a sentinel against every plague. When this spiritual respiration descends and takes possession of the frame, there is thenceforth a guiding power, a positive inspiration, which selects the recipient's calling, which trains him for it, which leads him to favorable localities, and which coördinates affairs on a large scale. It will deal with groups as with individuals; it will re-distribute mankind; it will reorganize the village, the town, the work-shop, the manufactory, the agricultural district, the pastoral region, gathering human atoms from their degradation, and crystallizing them in resplendent unities."

All this will sound familiar to those who have read the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, as will also the Broctonian philosophy in respect to "eternal mating."

One feature of the government of this Community as set forth by Dyer is especially worthy of attention. He says they have a council of Direction, consisting of nineteen members; and that if any one of them dissents from any plan agreed upon by the rest, it is accepted as a providential indication that the time for carrying out the plan has not come; and they patiently wait till the whole nineteen are perfectly agreed. This brings to mind one of the best principles another Community has worked out, and which is thus stated: "In determining upon any course of action or policy, unanimity is always sought by committees, by the Business Board, and by the Community. All consider themselves as one party, and intend to act together or not at all."

The "Respirationists" have no unitary mansion, though quite a number live in one of their largest dwellings. They have a number of small dwellings scattered over their large domain, some of which I notice are unoccupied.

The amount of land they possess is variously estimated at from one thousand to two thousand acres. Dyer states it at 1,000 acres. They have recently sold some farms; and the impression prevails that they would be glad to reduce their land still more, even if they do not all remove to California. Their principal income at present is derived from the sale of pressed hay.

Their members include several nationalities, but are perhaps predominantly English. They have fewer Japanese than formerly. One of the members told me that the Community numbers sixty or seventy persons at the present time.

The impression that I received from my interview with these "Respirationists" is that they have two essentials of permanency:

1. A strong religious afflatus;
2. Strong leadership;

but that their religion is too mystical, and their leadership too supernal, for the present age. Their chances for a long life seem good; but their chances for becoming an important factor in the world's progress, I should say, are small indeed.

W. A. H.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Harvard, Mass., July 31, 1876.

EDITOR OF AMERICAN SOCIALIST:—I have been a resident of this town nearly two years, and as my home is half-way between the Harvard and Shirley Shakers I have had an opportunity of studying their system, which I had for a long time desired. Last year I improved a business call to the interior of New York and made a brief visit at Oneida Community, and I have been an attentive reader of the *SOCIALIST*, which appears to be making rapid strides to the foremost position as the organ of practical and scientific Socialism. I have no doubt there is much that is worthy of attention in these various attempts to reach a higher life, and my interest is by no means abating, but I have approached the matter very cautiously, and with the practical examples under my notice, I think there is abundant reason for caution. But I would not confound caution with cowardice. If there is any real good in Communism we want it and are ready for it as soon as we can see it. But it appears to me that this is a subject that needs much study before it can be understood. I like your suggestions about a School of Socialism, and it may be that no more favorable location can be found than

this town for such a movement. Besides the Shakers, this town contains the location selected for Mr. Alcott's Community, Fruitlands, and it is not many years since there was another Community in existence within a few miles, in the town of Groton. In this county is Hopedale, and we are within thirty miles of Brook Farm. Northampton is somewhat further, and in that neighborhood is the Massachusetts Agricultural College, at Amherst, an institution which I suppose would furnish much information to practical Communists. Then we have another class of institutions which it seems to me Socialists should not ignore. We have a fine new State-prison building at Concord, twelve miles distant, and a lunatic asylum at Worcester. Do not charge me with poking fun at your system. I am deeply in earnest; for are there not instances of *compulsory* Socialism, from which many useful lessons may be drawn? Perhaps your readers will discern a better field for observation in the new State-prison for women at Framingham, and the State Industrial School for boys at Westboro, and a similar institution for girls at Lancaster (the next town), all within this county. I have been impressed with thoughts of these various institutions—which are pretty plentiful in this vicinity—when I have read of suggestions of Schools of Socialism in your paper. I have no time to engage in long correspondence on this subject, but if there is a real “tidal wave of Socialism,” I think it would be worth the while of some of those interested to make a visit to this town and found here a Harvard School of Socialism.

I notice you give some of the unpleasant features of Community life in the *SOCIALIST*, for instance, the suit of the Grosvenors with the Harvard Society of Shakers, in which case three of the principal members of the Society were expelled, and afterward sued the Society for wages. My attention had been previously attracted to that case, and it seems to me important to have it well understood whether those joining Communities are liable to lose their property or the results of a life's labor simply because of a change in religious belief. I suppose the tendency is to regard purity of life, rather than any peculiar form of belief—the real test that makes one worthy of membership. Am I correct in this view? I think it should be stated in relation to the Grosvenors that the real point apparently at issue was the amount paid to the departing sisters on leaving. They only received \$50.00 each after having lived in the Society nearly fifty years, or from early childhood.

I read with interest your account of Fruitlands in the Editorial Correspondence, and I think that short-lived attempt should be thoroughly studied during the life-time of its venerable founder. I hope your enterprise has opened the way for a complete and thorough examination of these early New England attempts at Communistic life. I confess to a great curiosity on these subjects if I have no higher motive, and I hope some rich fruit will ripen after your labors.

Faithfully yours, CHARLES W. FELT.

WHAT JOHN SMITH DID.

[Since we published such a feeling article on “The Smiths,” a week or two ago, several communications relating to that family have been sent in to us, and among them the following concerning the boy John, of that ilk:]

ONE day when John was quite a small boy, his mother left the house for a few minutes, and John plunged into the cellar, disobediently to taste of some home-made jam of which he was inordinately fond. Knowing its whereabouts he found no difficulty, and for a time quite patiently helped himself with his fingers. But at length, becoming more eager, he thrust his head down into the jar of preserves, and commenced lapping its delicious contents directly into his mouth.

Now the jar, it should be known, was one of the old-fashioned kind, small-necked and large bodied; so when, after a considerable lapse of time, this enterprising juvenile of wholesale propensities essayed to raise his head for a breathing spell, behold! up went the jar also and settled snugly down about his head and shoulders, while the precious contents oozed comfortably down his neck, or ran in dark, sluggish rills over his jacket. Finding himself ensnared, John struggled frantically to escape from this strange and terrible helmet. In vain. His head seemed to have suddenly and wonderfully enlarged. He could not withdraw it. His chin caught on the jar's neck at every effort.

Meantime his mother had returned and not finding John about, became alarmed and commenced an anxious search for him. No John appeared. She ran to the neighbors. He was not there. She returned in despair. At length she espied the cellar door open and all was revealed. There, rolling on the floor in an agony of fright, lay her inglorious son, his head still buried in the jar, and his clothes “a sight to behold.” Mrs. Smith was obliged to break that jar, in order to restore John to society.

—A class of six-year-old juveniles were one day talking about the story of Adam and Eve with their teacher, when one of the boys, after a seeming earnest reflection of some seconds, said: “Well, now, I should think that Adam or

God—Adam, any way—would have chopped down that naughty tree in the middle of the garden that made them so much trouble. I should.”

SUMMARY OF NEWS.

HOME.

The highest heat reported during the late warm weather was 112 degrees in the shade.

The current rate for transportation of corn from Chicago to New-York is 6½ cts. per bushel.

A bill appropriating \$200,000 for the completion of the Washington monument, has passed both houses of Congress.

The reduction of the national debt in July was \$1,138,034. This is about \$150,000 less than during the same month last year.

Uncle Sam has an addition to his family this Centennial year. Colorado is admitted to the Union as the thirty-eighth State.

The Indian chief “Rain-in-the-Face” has arrived at Standing Rock, with 220 lodges of Indians from the hostile camp.

The Centennial Exhibition managers have decided to admit schools to the Exhibition at half-rates, *i. e.*, twenty-five cents each.

A new society for the relief of poor widows, orphans and sick children, has been formed by the Church of Our Savior, in New-York.

The Democratic nominees for President and Vice-President, Tilden and Hendricks, have at last sent in their letters of acceptance.

The death-rate in New-York city was lower last week than for any corresponding week, with one exception in 1869, for the past ten years.

Peter Cooper and Samuel T. Cary have been nominated as the “greenback” or “soft-money” candidates for President and Vice-President.

The application for an injunction, to stop the work on the East River Bridge, has been refused by Judge Johnson in the United States Circuit Court.

The bill to repeal the clause in the Resumption Act, fixing a day for the resumption of specie payment, has passed the House of Representatives.

The latest discovered preventive of the potato-bug pest are sunflowers. It is said that this bug will not molest plants that grow within twelve or fifteen feet of the sunflower.

It is announced that De Witt C. Littlejohn will follow up his opposition to Gov. Tilden in the St. Louis convention and leave the Democratic party to work for Hayes and Wheeler.

The Democrats oppose the increase of the cavalry forces called for by Gen. Sherman because they are afraid they will be used in the South for party purposes instead of going out against the Indians.

The immigration of Chinese to California has decreased some 6,000 the past year; and the proportion of women to men is greater, being one in a hundred, whereas in 1875 it was one in two hundred.

A late decision by Judge Schaeffer, at Salt Lake City, has reduced the amount of alimony to be paid to Ann Eliza Young, from \$500 per month to \$100. This will reduce the total amount to be paid by Brigham Young from \$17,000 to \$3,600.

Prof. S. A. King, accompanied by ten other persons, made an ascension in the balloon *Buffalo*, from the Centennial grounds on the 4th inst. The balloon went up in fine style amidst the cheers of thirty-five or forty thousand people who were there to witness the ascension.

Gen. Belknap has been acquitted by the Senate, as the vote was not two-thirds in favor of conviction. Thirty-five Senators voted for conviction, and twenty-five for acquittal. The reason given by those in favor of acquittal was, that the Senate did not have jurisdiction over the case.

The proposed amendment to the Constitution of the United States, prohibiting any State from making a law that will prevent the establishing or exercise of any religion, or from allowing the use or control of money raised by taxation, by any sectarian body, has passed both houses of Congress.

The hostile Indians are not strong enough to meet the United States troops in a body, and there is every indication that the Indians will separate into marauding parties for attacking the settlements, and thus force the troops to divide into smaller companies, in order to protect the settlers and the stage routes.

An Indian club-point was recently found on the grounds of the Centennial Exhibition. Mr. F. H. Cushing, seeing the point protruding above the soil, where it had been turned up with the earth when the grounds were plowed, instantly recognized it as an old relic. From its resemblance to weapons used by ancient Indian tribes, it is thought to be five hundred years old.

Mr. Samuel Leavitt of New-York is about starting a colony in Virginia. It is to be a Communistic, joint-stock co-operative association, and will be located on the old George Mason estate about four miles south of Mount Vernon. Col. Edward Daniels, the present owner of the estate, puts it into the association as stock, and expects no return except the annual dividend which may accrue on his share of the stock. The estate now comprises 800 acres of land with 7,000 fruit trees and other improvements on it. Mr. Leavitt claims that they are “Eclectics, choosing the apparently valuable features from all the leading social systems.” They intend to make a beginning in Virginia about November next.

The Theosophical Society has sent one of its members, Mr. E. S. Spaulding, to accompany a party of nine Arabs to their country. These Arabs arrived in New-York from the West Indies, in a destitute condition, and by the kindness of the Mayor were admitted to the Bellevue Hospital. They do not remember how they came to this country, only that they found themselves in an open boat, and after being nine days out, they landed at Demerara; from there they went to Trinidad and then to New-York. Col. H. S. Olcott, who is President of the Theosophical Society, in raising means to send them home, found the Captains of the vessels sailing to

Gibraltar unwilling to take them, for fear the Arabs would be mutinous on the voyage. To reassure the Captain who finally consented to take them, the Theosophical Society sent Mr. Spaulding with them, and gave him instructions to restore the Arabs to their families and then to see every possible phase of magical and necromantic phenomena, and report the facts to the Society on his return. He is also to find a real magician or sorcerer who will come back with him and display his powers before the Society.

It is suggested by some one that Pres. Grant be appointed by Congress permanent President of the Smithsonian Institute, at the close of his present term of office, with a salary of \$10,000 a year. For services rendered in the late war, and as Pres. Grant left a life-office in the army to become chief magistrate, he should be given some post that would bring him sufficient income to support him in comfortable circumstances. For the honor of the country, men retiring from its highest office, should have a pension, large enough for them to live in respectable circumstances.

FOREIGN.

There are about 300,000 Turkish troops in the field against Servia.

The Society of the Red Cross of Russia has sent a sanitary train, with surgeons and nurses, to the Servian army.

The Mahommedan subjects of Great Britain in India number 40,000,000 and the Christians only 896,638.

England and France are having exceedingly warm weather; the mercury in Paris repeatedly showing over 100 degrees.

The Turkish forces under Moukhtar Pasha have been cut off from joining the other part of the army, and will have to flee into Austria, or surrender.

Prince Toussoun Pasha, only son of the late Said Pasha and son-in-law to the Khedive of Egypt has recently died, at the early age of twenty-one.

The marriage of King Alfonso of Spain to the daughter of the Duke de Montpensier is positively arranged, but the ceremony will be postponed till next year.

The route of a new railway from London to the north has been surveyed. The construction will cost £4,775,000 and when completed the road will be the most direct route to the north.

They have a very unceremonious way of deserting a dying Sultan in Turkey. Almost before the breath leaves the body those around run off to do homage to the new occupant of the throne. Then one or two of the old servants of the deceased wrap the body in straw matting, prop it up behind the door, and after dark quietly carry it out of the palace and bury it.

A Scotch Minister recently told his neighbor that he spoke two hours and a-half the Sunday previous. “Why, minister, were you not tired to death?” asked the neighbor.

“Aw, nae,” said he, “I was as fresh as a rose; but it would have done your heart good to see how tired the congregation was.”

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

“Are there not great advantages in Communism in regard to *nursing the sick*? One of the greatest difficulties which a physician encounters in his daily practice is the lack of good nurses. In serious cases the life of the patient is often more dependent upon good nursing than upon medical attention. It is often the case that the only good nurse who can be found is soon disabled by protracted labor, and then we have to take up with whatever and whoever we can get. Do you realize your own advantages in this matter?”

Not always: But that good nursing is a great advantage of Communism there can be no shadow of doubt. We know of several lives which have been saved by good nursing and *nothing else*, so far as external measures were concerned. We repeat it; good careful nursing of the sick is one of the great advantages of Communism. There is no mistake about it.

Says a young friend:—“I have been trying to hive some ‘bumble bees’ with the expectation (a faint one) of persuading them to make honey. They not only refused to make honey in their new home, but have cleared out—every buzzing bumble of them.”

Precisely. And that was just what they did once in our juvenile days when we undertook to “civilize” them. We secured a liberal allowance of sting and nothing else in return for all of our efforts. We suspect there is a lack of evolution yet in bumble bees.

A lady writes:—“Please tell me the correct name of that beautiful flower I saw at your place last week. It stood near the door. I have been trying to tell a friend of mine the name, but I can remember no more than ‘Rodendrum’—something. Why do they have such hard names to such flowers?”

Our fair correspondent probably refers to a species of “*Rhodendrum Campanulatum*,” and we réecho her query: “Why do they have such abominably hard names in botany? When one comes across a string of names like these: *Calacechinus*; *Oresigenesi*; *Finaustrina*; *Krascheninikovii*; *Gravenhorstia*; *Anderzejofskya*; *Milichoferia*; *Monactin-erina*; and *Pleuroschsmatypus*, we are tempted to abandon the study in despair.

“How do you distinguish between the ‘heart’ and the ‘head;’ or between the intellect and the emotions? Does not every thing of that kind come under the definition of mind?”

Perhaps so. We are aware that it is not always easy to distinguish between head and heart; between intellect and emotion especially if one or the other has entire control. Still, it can be done by those who study themselves and their sensations. Fanny Kemble, in the *August Atlantic*, gives a very clear view of the two, intellect and the heart, working together yet distinct from each other. She says: “The curious part of acting to me is the sort of double process which the mind carries on at once, the combined operation of one's faculties, so to speak [head and heart] in diametrically opposite directions; for instance, in that very last scene of Mrs. Beverly, while I was half dead with crying in the midst of real grief, created by an entirely *unreal* cause, I perceived that my tears were falling like rain all over my silk dress and spoiling it; and I calculated and measured most accurately the space that my father would require to fall in, and moved myself and my train accordingly, in the midst of the anguish I was to feign, and absolutely did endure. It is this watchful faculty [the intellect] (perfectly prosaic and commonplace in its nature), which never deserts me while I am uttering all that exquisite, passionate poetry in Juliet's balcony scene, while I feel as if my own soul [heart] was on my lips, and my color comes and goes with the intensity of the sentiment I am expressing; which prevents me from falling over my train, from setting fire to myself with the lamps placed close to me, from leaning upon my canvas balcony when I seem to throw myself all but over it. In short, while the whole person seems to be following the mind [heart] in producing the desired effect and illusion upon the spectator, both the intellect and all the senses are constantly engrossed in guarding against the smallest accidents that might militate against it; and while representing things absolutely imaginary, they are taking cognizance of every real surrounding object that either assists or mars the result they seek to produce.”

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